



CITY OF LANGLEY COUNCIL APPLICATION

DEADLINE: DECEMBER 13, 2010 BY 5:00 PM

112 Second St./PO Box 366 Langley, Washington 98260 (360) 221-4246

Name: Last	ADAMS	ROBIN	GEORGE
Street Address - Permanent Residence	752 FURMAN AVENUE		
Mailing Address (if different)	PO BOX 1303		
City	LANGLEY	WA	98260
Email address	ROBIN.ADAMS@CRUGROUP.COM		
			321 4547
			321 4707
			321 4707

NOT ELIGIBLE

Are you 18 years of age or older? YES NO

Are you a registered voter? YES NO

Have you lived in the City of Langley for the last 12 months? YES NO

BACKGROUND: Please fill out and include a resume if available.

Education BA/MA POLITICS, PHILOSOPHY & ECONOMICS, OXFORD UNIVERSITY

Occupation (s): MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT

Other Volunteer Positions: TREASURER, KIMBERTON WALDORF SCHOOL 1982-1990, 1994-96
CHAIR, BLUFFS WATERSHEDS COMMITTEE, 2008

Hobbies: SKIING, HIKING, THEATER

Other applicable experience: TRANSPORTATION ECONOMICS INC SHIPPING

SKILLS:

List Applicable Skills ECONOMIC FORECASTING, PROJECT ANALYSIS,
FINANCIAL ANALYSIS, UTILITY RATE DESIGN

DESIRE:

Please attach a cover letter and describe why you are interested in serving on the City Council and what expertise or perspective you would bring.

By signing below I attest that the above information is accurate.

Signature: Robin Adams Date: 12 November 2010

**752 Furman Avenue
PO Box 1303
Langley, WA 98260**

Mayor Paul Samuelson
City of Langley

12th November 2010

Dear Paul,

Council Member Application

I would like to apply for appointment to City Council for the un-expired term of vacant position #2. This letter contains some personal background information and thoughts on what I believe are the key issues faced by the City at this time. I hope that it will assist the Council in their selection process.

Personal Information

I am a naturalized US citizen having immigrated in 1976. My wife Judith and I moved to Whidbey Island from south-eastern Pennsylvania in 2000. I purchased a vacant lot on Furman Avenue in 2006 and took up residence in the City in November 2007 upon completion of the construction of our house. My son William, his wife Lara and our grand-daughter moved to Whidbey Island in August and are living off Saratoga Road. My eldest daughter, Laura, lives in Maryland with another grand-daughter and our youngest daughter, Rachel, is completing her masters degree at the University of London.

I am currently employed by CRU Strategies, a management consulting firm serving the global mining, metals and fertilizer chemicals industry. I am the Director of their worldwide negotiation support consulting practice. I also lead the company's intellectual-property development efforts. In connection with this, I mentor and train employees who are sent here on short-term internships from our offices around the world. I started this business in 1984, expanded it to 20 full time employees in the US and Europe and merged it into CRU in 1996.

As I mentor and train other employees, I expect to be in a position gradually to reduce my full time workload. I have an interest in devoting correspondingly more time to public service. I have always had an interest in this field. As a young man in the UK, I was an active member of the Liberal Party and ran in two general elections and one local government election in 1974. The demands of raising a family and starting a business precluded a continuation of this activity, but I was able to serve for two terms totaling 11 years as Treasurer of the Kimberton Waldorf School in Pennsylvania.

Business Development in Langley

In common with all levels of government, Langley is facing challenging times. There is little that Langley can do to accelerate national economic recovery. However, we can, and in my opinion should, prepare ourselves so that we can compete effectively for new business when this takes place.

I think that our City suffers from diseconomies of scale. There is not enough purchasing power to sustain a vibrant merchant community as evidenced by the loss of strategically important vendors and the many vacant storefronts. This, in turn, translates into stagnant or falling sales tax revenues, which compromises the ability of the City to provide the services that its citizens expect. Although residents have shown that they are willing to approve higher taxes (most recently in connection with the Library annexation), I believe that the appetite for tax increases is extremely limited. It seems to me that revenue growth must, therefore, come predominantly from longer-term business expansion.

In the short term we can identify the obstacles to business expansion and, having done this, seek to remove or minimize them. As economic conditions improve, there will be opportunities to go out and actively sell businesses on the virtues of locating in Langley, hopefully in conjunction with property owners and private organizations.

As you know, I have recently been involved in a lengthy appeal process over what I felt was an inappropriate planning application. While I believe that this process ultimately arrived at a correct decision, the time, energy and money involved was disproportionate. We need to look at what happened and substantially streamline the process, while still preserving the rights of all parties involved. Associated with this, I would also like to mention the uncertainty created by the recent development moratorium. Given the reduction in national construction activity, the practical effect of the above has probably not been very significant in terms of lost business. However, I recognize that we may be developing an image problem that could, if not corrected, hurt us more significantly in the future. If appointed, I will want to address these code, environmental and procedural issues sooner rather than later, so the City is ready for the recovery when it takes place.

While construction activity always has a high profile, we must also identify and address the obstacles that exist to the growth of other businesses. The City Council does not have the power to remove all of them, but we can act as an advocate in relation to other entities. As an example, potential changes to the ferry service have significant implications for the ability of Langley residents to earn a living off island and for the ability of visitors to come here. Other examples are the poor level of courier services and the weakness of cellular communications, although the latter has somewhat improved recently. We need to work actively with both public bodies and private companies to systematically identify business obstacles and secure the right outcomes on such issues

Budget and Financial Issues

Although the City's revenues grew strongly between 2005 and 2008, they are no longer growing. Moreover, expenses grew equally strongly. In the short run, there is probably no alternative to reducing expenses. I understand that the key budget decisions will have been made by the time this appointment becomes effective. However, I believe we should not miss the opportunity presented by this crisis to fundamentally review the structure of the City's income and expenses to ensure that our finances are sustainable long-term.

A distinction can be made between City services that are inherently part of the public commons – such as street maintenance and public safety – and services whose size is determined by private decisions – most obviously water and sewer. I believe that the key to ensuring that public services are not “over consumed” is, as far as possible, to align decisions to use the latter services with appropriate price signals. I prepared an analysis of some of these issues for you a couple of years ago in relation to water and sewer and, if appointed, I hope that further progress can be made in this area.

There are also some City services demand for which is variable over the business cycle. I think that there is potential to save money by contracting for the supply of these services on an “as required” basis.

In my professional career, I have been involved in such activities as forecasting and financial risk analysis. I also have a particular expertise in utility contract negotiation and strategic outsourcing decisions. I believe, therefore, that I am qualified to assist the City on a number of these longer-term issues.

Environmental Values and Growth

One of the key selling points of Langley is its “village by the sea” atmosphere and the high quality environment we currently enjoy. It is of the greatest importance that we take care to preserve this as it is integral to the quality of life of residents and it is what attracts tourists, one of our major sources of business.

Too often environmental concerns and opposition to growth are presented as bedfellows. I believe, on the contrary, that growth in Langley is positive for the environment because it involves a lower incremental level of impervious surfaces, road and other infrastructure construction per unit than growth in the unincorporated portion of Island County. It also reduces the amount of supporting infrastructure investment required. Therefore, I am firmly committed to the order of magnitude population increase envisaged in the Comprehensive Plan. In fact I think we should be pushing Island County to more proactively direct growth to Langley and other already developed urban areas, which is the intent of the Growth Management Act (and which is not happening in Island County).

Given our substantial urban growth area, such growth can be readily accommodated while preserving significant green areas within the City and a network of interconnected

trails and wildlife corridors around the City. As a result of my work on the recent Comprehensive Plan's bluffs and watersheds committee, I am familiar with impervious surface issues and have recommended to the Planning Advisory Board that emphasis be shifted from regulating the square footage of individual properties to regulating the overall impact of a development on impervious surfaces and the associated implications for aquifer recharge and evapo-transpiration.

Reconciling growth and environmental integrity implies a move away from traditional design paradigms. There is a danger that this change may be uncomfortable for some of the more traditional developers and investors. The City may, therefore, find it advisable to engage in a proactive dialogue with the property development community in order to allay concerns and attract proposals that are appropriate to our particular situation. As a management consultant, I have the background to provide the business and financial analysis component to this effort, hopefully in collaboration with the volunteer involvement of the extremely talented and creative design community that we are fortunate to have in Langley.

Availability

I understand that the basic requirements of this position involve preparation for and attendance at two Council meetings each month and additional time on specific tasks as determined by Council.

My current business obligations involve work on a project basis. Therefore I spend quite lengthy periods here in Langley interspersed by travel to clients worldwide. The nature of some of these trips is such that I may be away for up to 3 weeks at a time. I understand that State law allows for participation by teleconference and I propose to take advantage of this whenever practical. With appropriate planning, I can arrange to participate in this way when traveling in most parts of the world. However, when traveling in Europe this will not be practical, so I expect that I will probably miss 2 or 3 meetings per year.

Apart from that I have a flexible schedule and work in town. Consequently I am in a position to handle the additional mandates that may be assigned to me by the Council.

I would like to thank you for considering this application and look forward to responding to the questions of Council Members in due course,

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robin G Adams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Robin G Adams